

LONDON COUNCILS
BUSINESS PLAN
2013/14



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Introduction and purpose

London Councils' core purpose is to help London local government successfully to shape London both as a world class capital city and its localities.

Specifically, London Councils aspires to be:

- a highly respected and influential lobbyist and advocate for boroughs, promoting their leadership of a broad range of local public services and communities, as well as fighting for them to get the resources, powers and freedoms necessary to play that role
- a catalyst for effective sharing between boroughs – people, practice, knowledge, information and services. London Councils seeks to be instrumental in both challenging and supporting London local government to improve performance and efficiency
- a provider of a clearly defined range of quality and responsive services to Londoners and London organisations on boroughs' behalf.

This plan sets out the four broad, over-arching themes for the year that set all of our work into context. It describes the ways in which London Councils goes about its work – with members, member authorities and others.

It also sets out the individual projects and main work programme for the Policy and Public Affairs and Services Directorates, which underpin the overall work of the organisation, help deliver its core purpose and reflect its over-arching themes.

Context

In the context of 2013/14, London Councils needs to undertake this role against the backdrop of two significant challenges facing our member authorities. They are:

Supporting councils in their work to face up to fundamental changes in their operations in response to the public finance climate

Exploiting opportunities in our work with government, London's public services and the wider GLA family to help place our members at the heart of driving growth and jobs and shaping a wide range of better integrated and more cost effective public services locally.

Themes

Our over-arching themes for 2013/14 are as follows:

Resourcing London. In a period of acute financial retrenchment, we will work alongside our member boroughs and partners to:

- Ensure the best possible public financing for London.
- Mitigate the impact of financial reductions upon London boroughs.
- Support councils seeking to drive savings and efficiency.
- Engage with the work of the London Finance Commission, the Mayor's 2020 Vision and other initiatives to help position London effectively for the future financing environment.

Securing devolution and localism. We will:

- Continue to highlight the strong London argument for boroughs to be at the heart of commissioning a broader range of integrated local public services. This will include working to support the broader work roll out of community budgeting across London.
- Seek to build on the work of Lord Heseltine's review and the Government's response to it by working with the Mayor and GLA to extend the principles of City Deals to functional areas within London and to support boroughs and groups of boroughs in securing wider devolution to support the leadership of place.
- Support London local government in its work to turn this into practice on the ground by providing shared learning and approaches and developing London frameworks that allow this devolution to take place at local level.

Supporting London Delivery. We will:

- Provide a defined range of direct services to Londoners and London organisations on the collective behalf of boroughs.
- Act as a focal point for brokerage and co-ordination between boroughs and between different London public services, the GLA group and London's councils on key delivery issues.
- Work with key political, professional and managerial groupings across London local government to help strengthen the capacity of our member authorities to deliver high quality and cost effective services.

Organisational Change. In the context of significant organisational changes in the last three years, we will focus on:

- Managing our resources and asset base effectively to sustain the value for money improvements delivered to member authorities in the past three years.
- Equipping ourselves with the skills, knowledge and competences required to support London local government in this critical period.
- Continuing our drive to manage and deploy our resources flexibly in order to achieve maximum benefit for our member authorities.
- Driving down the overhead costs of our direct services.
- Creating an environment in which we attract talented people and challenge them to deliver outstanding performance.

Directorate work programmes

Our directorate programmes detail the range of work that will support our overall objectives, all of which relate in some way to our over-arching themes of resourcing London, securing devolution and localism, supporting London delivery and organisational change.

These Directorate programmes are set out on pages 7 and 8.

The way we work

Underpinning the way we work is the following set of principles:

- We are a cross party, politically led organisation motivated by our common commitment to the interests of London and London local government.
- We seek to harness the power that comes from the practice and the people of our member authorities.
- We work closely with the GLA group as well as with a range of public, private and third sector partners to promote London's interests and more broadly to secure our aims.
- We work in partnership with the national Local Government Association and seek mutually to reinforce our respective work on local government's overall behalf.
- We strive continuously to improve the effectiveness of our organisation on behalf of our member authorities and seek to make London Councils an attractive and challenging place for people to develop their careers.

Equalities

In line with our obligations under the Equalities Act 2010 London Councils agreed nine Equalities Tackling disadvantage effectively:

- Improving accessibility to London Councils website.
- Improving accessibility to Freedom Pass and Taxicard.
- Improving Freedom Pass take-up.
- Ensuring that the work of the shadow and subsequent statutory London Health Improvement Board works to improve the health of all Londoners, aiming for greater improvements in more disadvantaged communities.
- Improving accessibility to PATAS website.
- Improving the accessibility to Southwark Street.

Full details can be found on our website at: www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/aboutus/equalities/equalities

These objectives are currently being reviewed for progress and will be updated.

POLICY & PUBLIC AFFAIRS DIRECTORATE

2013/14 BUSINESS PLAN PRIORITIES

Cross Cutting

- Securing devolution to enable local integration of services.
- Ensuring welfare reform is sustainable in London's economic circumstances.
- Equipping boroughs to promote equality in the current environment.

Finance & Performance

- Delivering a fairer share of central government grant funding for London.
- Securing financial devolution and freedom for London.
- Supporting London to drive its own assurance performance and improvement.

Housing

- Transforming housing investment policies to meet London's needs.
- Managing the impact of increasing homelessness in London.

Transport & Environment

- Changing travel choices for a better transport system in London.
- Delivering waste efficiencies in London.
- Better energy deals for Londoners.

Economic Growth & Regeneration

- Driving economic growth throughout London.
- Driving economic growth at the local level.
- Planning reforms to deliver growth.
- Devolution to increase employment opportunities for Londoners.
- Devolution to make the skills system work for London.

Education & Children

- Providing strategic leadership for the London schools system.
- Delivering free early education for two year-olds.
- Sector-led improvement for children services.
- Children in care.

Health & Social care

- Creating the foundations for strong local government health leadership.
- Embedding new public health functions into local government.
- Supporting London to deliver health integration that improves outcomes and efficiency.
- Securing a viable future for adult social care in London.

Policing & Crime

- Shaping London's local policing and crime reduction
- Achieving better outcomes on mental health related ASB.

SERVICES DIRECTORATE

2013/14 BUSINESS PLAN PRIORITIES

Transport and Mobility

- Maintain Freedom Pass, Taxicard and London Lorry control schemes.
- Complete review of continued eligibility of pass holders.
- Implement revised method of apportionment for national rail and London Overground elements of Freedom Pass.
- Manage new taxicard taxi supply contract and implement remaining innovations.
- Introduce a new portal for TRACE to allow web and text enquiries of vehicles which have been impounded by boroughs.
- Initiate the new EU-funded projects.

PATAS

- Ensure consideration of 80,000 parking, traffic and road user charging appeals.
- Introduce on-line appeals system and electronic data transfer with boroughs.
- Consolidate and streamline POPLA service.
- Commence retendering of PATAS contract.

Young People's Education and Skills

- Provide leadership and influence (lobby for London, shape London's response to national policies, relationship management and communication – including 'Learner Voice London').
- Implement the Young Persons' Education and Skills strategy (publish an evidence base and an Annual Statement of Priorities, manage a data and research programme and support collaborative working).
- Lead strategic services and activities (support local authorities in their plans to implement:
- Raising the Participation Age; new responsibilities for Careers Guidance; major reform for young people with special educational needs) .
- Secure additional resources for London and work with partners to maximise the impact of investment (for example on; ESF Youth Programme, Youth Contract, Talent Match).

Capital Ambition

- Oversee 'London Ventures' (Capital Ambition future organisational model) and maintain effective governance including engaging with key stakeholders.
- Ensure effective programme management, including implementation and delivery of strategic decisions, notably concerning the use of remaining programme resources.
- Ensure effective financial management.
- Ensure an appropriate level of benefits monitoring and legacy information is available and communicated, helping to evidence London benefits from Capital Ambition and to support a level of continuity for future improvement and efficiency activity.

Community Services and Grants

- Commence and monitor new grants commissioning.
- Continue 2012/14 ESF programme.
- Consider how best to support boroughs' relationship with the voluntary sector by exchange of best practice.
- Delivery of Notify and Care Placements including consideration of enhancements.
- Consider London Councils ESF CFO status 2014-2020.

ABOUT London Councils

London Councils is the representative body for London local government committed to helping our members ensure they have the powers and resources they need to do the best possible job for their residents and local businesses.

We develop policy and do all we can to help our boroughs improve the services they deliver. We also run a range of services ourselves, all designed to make life better for Londoners.

For instance, we run the Freedom Pass concessionary fares scheme, which gives a million older and disabled Londoners free travel on buses, tubes and trains. The scheme costs more than £260 million a year, and is paid for by our member councils.

London Councils is a cross-party organisation, funded and run by our member authorities to work on behalf of them all, regardless of political persuasion. We also act as the employers' organisation for the 32 London boroughs, providing advice, support and training, and representing them in negotiations.

London Councils' members are all 32 London boroughs and the City of London. The Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime and the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority are also in membership.

The main policy decisions are taken by our Leaders' Committee, which meets monthly (except January and August) and brings together the leaders of all member authorities.

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